

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Sen. Jill Tokuda, Chair

Sen. Ronald Kouchi, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 8, 2015

9:00 a.m.

Room 211

SUPPORT of SCR 90 -COMMUNITY PLACEMENT FOR WOMEN

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi and Members of the Committees!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies for almost two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the 6,000 Hawai'i individuals under the care and custody of the department of public safety, always mindful that 1,500 of those imprisoned are serving their sentences abroad, thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

SCR 90 encourages the department of public safety to continue and expand its structured community placement programs to assist in transitioning formerly incarcerated female inmates back into society.

Community Alliance on Prisons is in strong support of this measure.

Community Placement must be funded as the final phase of transition, allowing women to move from a highly structured residential program to supervised independent living in the community. Services address important aspects of the reentry continuum, providing continuity and a more integrated, seamless re-socialization and reentry process. This critical component assists individuals in their adjustment to greater independence as they transition from more to less structure.

The Community Placement component serves to:

- Reduce recidivism and the associated costs to taxpayers by monitoring residents in independent community living settings prior to their release to parole.
- Reduce the potential for delinquency among the children of program graduates through parenting and family re-integration program components.
- Provide participants the support necessary to sustain employment and advance in their

careers, thus decreasing both welfare dependency and the inclination to return to criminal behavior for economic reasons.

- Enhance the odds for success with regard to maintaining employment and stability in housing, thus eliminating two of the most critical stressors faced by individuals in transition from prison to the community.
- Reduce costs to tax payers in contributing to restoring peoples ' lives, impacting health and human service budgets and making safer communities for all.
- Reduce prison overcrowding by freeing up contracted beds for community status women.

Community Placement provides structure, monitoring and accountability in a critical phase of re-entry.

Community Placement reinforces and provides opportunities to practice tools and pro-social, responsible living in participants' on-going transitional process.

Community Placement interrupts the inter-generational cycle of trauma, substance abuse, crime and incarceration.

Mahalo for this opportunity to share our thoughts on this important strategy for reducing the incarcerated population, preparing women for successful reintegration to their families and communities, and promoting safe, healthy and just communities!